## POSSESSIONS.

A poet loved a star.
And to it whispered nightly,
"Being so fair, why art thou so far?
Or why so coldly shine, who shinest so brightly?
O beauty wooed and unpossessed,
O might I to this beating heart
But clasp thee once and then die blest!"
That star her poet's love,
So wildly warm, made human.
And leaving for his sake her heaven above,
His star stooped earthward and became a woman.

"Thou who hast wooed and hast possest,
My lover, answer: Which was blest,
The star's beam or the woman's heart!"
"I miss from Heaven," the man replied,
"A light that drew my spirit to it."
And to the man the woman sighed,
"I miss from earth a poet."
—Edward Bulwer Lytton.

## THE PRIZE SNAKE STORY.

N 1880, while a member of E Company of the Texas State Rangers, I was ordered up into Presidio county with a squad of men to follow Victorio's murderous band of Apaches. After the death of that famous chieftian in the Candelera Mountains, Chihuahua, Mex., the remnant of the band recrossed the Rio Grande, and my command trailed them into Sierra Diablo, just across the line of New Mexico, killed several, and brought three prisoners back to Fort Davis, the seat of Presidio county. It was feared that the scattering hostiles would unite again and make another raid into Texas, and to be prepare for an invasion of that sort I was ordered to go into permanent camp at Mooskie's Ranch, which is about eight miles from the post.

Before we had been established at the old ranch a week our camp was overrun with salamander rats, a small rodent resembling the common field mole, but a trifle larger. The pests created great havoc among our forage, and as corn was high-priced and hard to get we seriously considered abandoning our camp, as it is almost impossible to get rid of salamanders once they establish themselves in a place. One of our Mexican herders suggested a way out of the difficulty. He assured us that the king snake or prairie runner was death to salamanders, and a few of these reptiles turned loose in camp would soon rid us of the corn-eating rats.

On the big Prison Plain beyond Miltre Peak, at a point where the Southern Pacific Railroad now crosses, was known to be a favorite haunt of the snakes, and a scout of men was ordered out to capture a few. The boys were gone two days, and returned with a score or more of reptiles. The squirming lot were released in the old ranche, and in two days' time they had dispatched the last salamander. After their food had become exhausted the snakes disappeared, and, as they can travel like a race horse, probably made their way back to their old haunts on the Prison Plain. One big fellow had been trampled upon by a Ranger and so badly wounded that its fellows migrated, and speedily became a great pet. It ultimately recovered, but evinced no inclination to leave. We christened his snakeship Bobo, and it soon became as tame as a kitten. Bobo, was very fond of milk, and, as we had an abundant supply—a neighboring ranchman giving us all that we could carry away, the snake was always given a bowl of its favorite beverage every night.

Bobo had the freedom of the camp, and every man in the command was his friend. In the morning, when the horses and back mules were sent out under guard to graze, Babo would accompany the herders, coiling up like a lariat about the horn of one of the men's saddles.

Sometimes the snake would make a trip to Fort Davis with a ranger, but lit never would stay away from the camp over night. As soon as the sun set it would scuttle away, and, being able to travel as fast as the average horse, would reach the camp in time for its evening ration of milk.

There was an abundance of game, deer, antelope and elk in the vicinity of our camp, and one day a big horn or Rocky Mountain sheep was started up in the Davis Mountain, but it escaped before a shot could be had at it. I was particularly fond of hunting and anxious to bag a big horn. Without saying anything of my purpose, I left camp early one morning with the determination of bringing in the horns of the big sheep, if I stayed away a week.

Reaching the foothills of the Davis range, I entered one of the numerous canons which traverse it, and, trotting along, kept a sharp lookout for big horn sign. The canon in which I was riding had ages before been the bed of a mighty river, and I was obliged to watch sharply for natural wells, hundreds of which pierced the old bed of the stream. Night overtook me, and I had not seen the faintest sign of the quarry. I began to look about for a suitable camping place, where there was grass and water, and, as twilight is very brief in that latitude, urged my horse into a brisk canter. Darkness came on very quickly, and I was soon surrounded by an inky gloom. Suddenly my horse pulled up so sharply that I threw myself far back in the saddle to keep from being pitched from my seat, and then I found myself falling, with the horse beneath me.

There was a shock and for a moment I was stunned. When I recovered consciousnes I found that my horse had tumbled down a natural well, thirty feet in depth, and had been instantly killed. I was considerably shocked, but fortunately no bones broken. It did not take me long to realize the seriously uncomfortable nature of my position, for plainsmen think quickly.

The well into which I had fallen was perfectly round. Its sides were as smooth as glass, and it was too far from side to side for me to climb out by the use of elbows and knees.

I was in a stone prison, a dungeon from which there was no escape without help from the outside, and as I realized this a drop of rain splashed in my face and I heard the distant rumble of thunder. A storm was coming on, and in a minute's time, if there was a heavy fall of rain, my trail would be obliterated. I tried to calculate how long I could hold out before a search party would come after me, and give it up when I considered how unlikely it was that any but the merest accident would bring the searchers to this particular place. I was in a tight hole in more ways than one, and the thoughts that came to me in the next two or three minutes were decidedly solemn ones. Suddenly a cold, clammy body touched my hand and I heard Bobo's familiar hiss. I spoke to the reptile, and it climbed up my body to my shoulder. Where it had managed to secret itself all this time I could not at first imagine, until I remembered that on the morning previous I had found his snakeship in one of my saddle pockets, to which he had crept for shelter from the cold night air.

"Poor Bobo," I said aloud. "We are companions in misery, and if I am not mistaken our bones will eventually lie together here, mixed up with those of my horse. Any way, I'll take a smoke."

I filled my pipe and struck a match. The bright light annoyed Bobo, and, raising his head, it reached out toward the side of the well. Before the match went out it had got a hold upon the smooth stone and was wriggling its way toward the top. I don't know what made me think of it, but I suddenly remembered Bobo's fondness for milk and dislike of staying away from me over night.

Before the reptile was beyond my reach I pulled it back, determined to make it the means of getting out of the well. I twined its body about my neck, and by the use of indearing phrases and an occasional stroke of the hand quieted the reptile. Striking a match, I tore a leaf from my notebook, and hastily scribbled a few lines describing the accident which had befallen me, and locating as well as I could the canon in which it had happened. I enclosed this note in a piece of buckskin cut from my tobacco pouch and then with a bit of wire twisted from the ring of my riata, bound the little packet to Bobo's tail.

I drew the wire so tightly that it must have cut into the flesh, for Bobo tried to strike my hand, and hissed angrily. Satisfied that the packet would not come off. I held the reptile against the wall and released it. Quickly Bobo crawled to the top, although somewhat hampered by the wired on pocket and was off.

It seemed an eternity that night of an anxious suspense, but toward morning I fell asleep, doubled up over the dead body of my horse. When I awoke the sun was shining directly overhead. I had just taken a drink from my canteen when I heard the clatter of hoofs and knew that relief had come. I pulled out my six-shooter and blazed away at the well. There was a volley of answering shots, and presently the boys were grouped around the edge of the well chaffing me in a good-natured way. A rope was lowered, and, after sending up my saddle, bridle and rifle, I was hauled up, somewhat stiff and sore, but about as thankful a man as could be found. Bobo had made straight for camp, and had reached the ranch some time during the night. It was not until morning, however, that the packet bound to his tail was noticed. As soon as it was taken off and my message read a scout at once started out after me.

## A Fortune to Be Made In Bread

Mr. Edward Atkinson said some time since there was a fortune waiting any person who would sell good home made bread over the counter at five cents a loaf, and any one who furnishes bread fit for starving nerves and overworked digestions deserves a fortune. But I never saw so-called health bread that was fit to eat more than once from a public bakery.

It is heavy, slack baked, unsalted bread of affliction. That one bakery was so successful in its first year that it could afford to shut down baking in the summer and rest. Now Boston sends bread to Maine for invalids and people who want to escape invalidism. If the women who write me about making jellies and fairy cake for sale would learn to make really good, wholesome bread without yeast or baking powder they would find it more profitable the year round. But they haven't mind enough to do it.—Shirley Dare.

## Fun with a Newly-Married Couple.

An incident occurred on a Western train as it bowled merrily over the prairie in the direction of Milwaukee that was cruel and yet laughable in the extreme. A newly married couple, so very, very newly married, got on the train at Chicago and took a front seat in the car, where each passenger could watch their very action. The groom was a tall, bony individual, one of the silk hat, Prince Albert coat grooms, with a white dress tie at his throat and a white rose in his buttonhole. A regular web-footed country cross roads dude and the very atmosphere in his vicinity was permeated with the aroma of new-mown hay.

The bride was dressed in white, nodding white plumes graced her head, white kid gloves covered her hands and a large bouquet lay in her lap. Her face was a dead ringer for a mask and was homely enough to ache, but this did not seem to trouble the groom, who was snuggled up as close to her as he could get. So deeply were they wrapped up in each other that they were entirely unconscious of the fact that they were the observed of all observers and especially of a party of traveling men who sat a little way back of them. The groom would whisper some sweet nothing in the bride's ear and she, with a becoming blush, would turn and beam upon him, showing to the passengers while doing so a nose that protruded from her face like a tumor. Oh, she was homely!

Finally, as the night waxed on apace, the two young things began to grow more coochy-coochy, and as the train pulled out of Wadsworth Reuben stretched forth his long arm and wound it tenderly about his bride's neck. Upon seeing this every drummer in the party began to whistle, while one evil-minded individual with a State street jag yelled, "Break away!" With a painful sigh that could be heard all over the car, the poor groom slowly took his arm away and again the couple fell to whispering. The whispering was continued for a number of miles, and then, when the groom thought everybody behind him was asleep, he once more placed his arm lovingly about the woman's neck. As before the action was followed by whistling and shouts, and again with a sigh the arm was removed. Poor fellow! the writer felt sorry for him, but those heartless drummers would have their way, and the above scene was repeated time after time. Finally the bride, although tired out, rested her head on her husband's manly breast and he had just begun to smooth her tresses when the crowd once more opened up and made night hideous with their noise. This was too much for the bride and with a sob she buried her face in her handkerchief and wept. The groom was visibly startled at this and in spite of the whistling of the crowd proceeded to pet and soothe the wounded feelings of the dear one at his side, but the more he soothed the more she wept. He looked around him for the first time since the train started and at just the right moment to catch a man in the act of whistling. Deliberately arising from his seat he approached the man without a word slapped him across the mouth with his half clenched hand. The man started to jump up, but the injured groom gave him another litter that sent him back into his seat again, where he was glad to remain. Then turning to the balance of the passengers he addressed them thus:

"Fellers, maybe I do look a little bit green and I'll admit that I'm a little bit new in this marrying business, consequently have overlooked your insults, but it has gone far enough now. You wasn't satisfied till you got the little woman to crying and now I am mad clean through. I am going back to my seat now, and my wife shall lay her head on my shoulder till we reach Milwaukee, and the first son-of-a-gun that dares to unfold his yawp will get jumped on by yours truly. If more than one makes a noise, so much the better, for I am in prime condition and once I commence, I'll lick every man in the car."

As he closed his little address, he walked back to his seat, said something to the sobbing woman and she, with a proud look in her eyes, laid her head on his shoulder. Not a man in the car dared open his head after that and the couple came to Milwaukee in peace.—Peck's Sun.

## Where Ignorance is Helpful.

One of the most successful women in society is the woman who knows absolutely nothing—that is, in the ordinary acceptance of the term—but whose nature is so nicely adapted to the needs and requirements of this life that she makes no blunders and hurts the tender feeling of no one. It is a matter for us to reflect upon, and it should incite us to help our children to cultivate that spirit of kindliness which would just as readily speak well of people as ill, if not to prefer to do so. We might teach our daughters that to listen patiently to the praise of others will not detract in the least from their charms. Those happy women who are capable of honest and hearty admiration for persons of their own sex are, and always have been, admired and loved, though without accomplishments or graces save this one of inborn charity and good will. —Chicago Herald.

## A Battle For Life.

The German aeronaut Wolf recently had a most terrible experience during a trip in a balloon from the grounds of the Cologne exhibition of the art of war, says the New York Sun. In company with Peter Schmitz and a manufacturer named Depenheuer, he started in the balloon Stollwerk at 1 o'clock on a cloudy afternoon. The balloon flew one mile almost straight upward into the thick of a storm. Wolf, fearful of the strong winds and hail around him, decided to make a landing as soon as possible.

"There was nothing but woods and woods under us," he said subsequently. "The balloon descended with violent rapidity. I finally discovered a little clearing on a steep mountain side, and prepared to anchor. The balloon descended more slowly, and the people who had observed us, hurried together underneath to help us land. I drew the ventilator a little farther open and motioned to Schmitz to get out. Depenheuer alighted, and all was well, when suddenly a whirlwind struck us. A terrible jerk sends me on my back in the car. I jump up to find all things swimming down, down below me, and two men clinging helplessly to the edge of the car. I catch the nearest one, a peasant who tried to assist in the landing. Too late! His strength is gone; he lets go, and I hear with horrible distinctness the muffled thud of his body on the ground.

"My heart sickens, but I rally to save my friend Schmitz, who still sticks to the car's side. Already the clouds are sinking beneath us. We are at least two miles above the earth. I try to raise Schmitz into the car, but he has sunk so far down from the edge that I can hardly grasp his wrists, and he is to weak to make an effort for himself. Both of us groan our despair, for all seems over. Slowly and painfully I raise him a little, set my teeth in the back of his coat, and endeavor to bind him fast with the storm line. A few moments drag by in hope and despair, and I finally succeed in fastening the rope under his arms and in tying him to the car. There is no safety in the device, however, for Schmitz to lose consciousness for an instant his body would relax and he would slip away. I call to him: 'Spread out your arms! Spread out your arms!' I heard his body move in response to my admonition, but his voice is lost to me.

"All this has occupied 25 minutes, and we have in the meantime been slipping upward. Everything now depends upon our making a quick landing. I draw open the valve, and we begin falling. We plunge into a great storm. The balloon spins around in circles, and sways about like a drunken man. Rain, hail, thunder and lightning sweep over us. The balloon reels so that I must lie on my face to remain in the car.

"Peter! Peter!' I call to my friend. 'Hold fast! Only hold fast!"

"No respone for he cannot hear me. The agitation of the balloon has loosened the rope and he has sagged back again, down the side of the car, so I can see only his finger-tips on the edge. I creep to the side of the car, seize his wrist with my left hand, and with my right hand and teeth I tug at the valve.

"'I cannot hold out longer,' comes in a weak voice from Schmitz, 'I am slipping away.'

"'One minute; only a minute more," I cry back, 'and we will be there.'

"The nearer we come to the ground, however, the more violent becomes the oscillation of the balloon. Finally we slip over a house, a barn, and drop like a shot to the ground.

"'Let go!' I shout to Schmitz, 'and jump away from the anchor.'

"He obeys, and the balloon, 195 pounds lighter, soars upward. I pull at the valve with all my strength, till the anchor catches a small tree. But the tree gives way, and with the rebound the car springs up to the balloon, and for a moment I hang on almost by my teeth. The anchor catches again in a tree, Again a jerk, a crack, a rebound, and I am tossed about like a ball. Once more the anchor catches, and I find myself just above the top of a dense old cedar. Head first I dive into the branches, and fall from bough to bough until I reach the ground. The anchor rattles near me. Another tree breaks, and the balloon sails off to the northeast.

"I had landed near Clive. In an hour I had the whole neighborhood out looking for Schmitz. He was not to be found. 'Dead,' I thought, as I limped painfully along between two peasants in the direction of the Overath railway station. Presently a group of men and women hurried toward us from a side street. Three of them were half-carrying a man. I hastened to them as rapidly as I could, and had Schmitz in my arms.

"To-day my head is dense and weighty. Every bone in my body aches and pulsates. I cannot sleep, and I have no peace, since I can get no news of the poor peasant who fell a sacrifice to his willingness to help me."

## A Little Girl's Reasoning.

A little girl of four wise years was visiting with her mother on Main street, and at the dinner table the mother insisted that she should eat fish and potato on her plate before being helped to dessert. The child turned gravely to her hostess and observed: "Do you know why my mother doesn't keep a pig? It's because she makes me eat up all the swill."—Springfield Homestead.

## IN THE COUNTRY.

He sat within his office in the city's busy mart
And thought this very happy thought: "To-morrow I'll depart
For quiet country places where the scenes that greet me here
And all the city noises shall be lost to eye and ear.
Away with all the ceaseless stir, I'm weary of the strife
Oh, what a pleasure it would be to lead a farmer's life!
I'll spend my week's vacation in the country fresh and free,
Its verdant fields and solitudes are just the thing for me."

He climbed up in the old barn's mow to feed the horses hay,
And thought this very happy thought: "To-morrow I'll away
From all this dull monotony and dreary stretch o' green,
I'm going to the city where there's something to be seen.
Why must I all my weary days plod one prosaic round?
Oh, I would dwell where busy hands in multitudes abound!
I'll spend my week's vacation in the city's throbbing heart.
Of which did fortune favor me I'd be an active part."

Each went to the desired place, but very strange to say.
Each one before the week was up was glad to come away.
They found each other's joys of white were flecked with shades of black.
Though each was glad to go, yet both were gladder to get back.
—Chicago Evening Post.

## LAZIEST BOY IN LUMBERTON.

F there is such a thing as a lazy boy at all (and the doubt is Aunt Myra's and not mine), Dick Hammond certainly is one. Aunt Myra says that "every one living has a liking for some form of labor if only the right thing be found," but I am afraid that some people must die without hunting much for theirs, and I don't believe some people would know their kind of work if it was to come around and knock at the front door and hand in its card.

Aunt Myra says that is society's look out; that society ought to find a man's field of usefulness, and introduce him to it; but society in Lumberton hadn't taken time yet to read Edward Bellamy's theories, and so society in Lumberton called Dick Hammond the laziest boy in town.

As an errand boy, he was certain to let the grass grow under his feet, while he watched a spider spin its web from the branch of a tree, and when he came back and was wrathfully told that the dinner was spoiled, waiting for the salt for which he had been sent, while he could not tell for the life of him whether it was salt or sugar he had been sent for, he could tell exactly how that spider cast out its line, and how it strenghtened it so as to bear its weight. If he was wanted to get the kindling ready for morning he might be induced to start, but there was no assurance that the kindling would ever be reached, owing to the tired condition of the boy, or if he succeeded in getting so far on the way the probabilities were that the kindling would be improvised into minute telegraph poles, and mother's basting cotton strung across the yard as the wire.

"No use to talk, Dick's the most noaccount fellow in Lumberton; he aint worth his salt as shure as you are born," said Dick's father, and all Lumberton pretty much agreed with Dick's father, from Elder Manly to Squire Van Huzen, for had not the preacher tried to induce Dick to hoe his garden, and to his chagrin found the first half-day productive of nothing more than one side of his stable covered with hieroglyphics in white chalk, and hadn't Squire Van-Huzen entrusted Dick with his horse, only to have a big bill for repairs to pay for damage done while Dick was trying how near he could imitate the buggy wheels in the sand?

Only Mr. Adams, the school teacher, and Aunt Myra had the courage and faith to hope that some good would come of Dick some day.

And this opinion hadn't changed much by the time Dick came to be a tall awkward boy of sixteen, with legs and arms too long for his jackets and trousers, and elbows and knees too ambitious to be out in the world to mind seams or patches.

"Its too cheap for anything, I know," said Hammond senior to his wife at the dinner table. There's a right smart chance of ties and bark on the hillside, but I ain't able to get it down, and it can't be done without money enough to build a slide, and that would cost a heap."

"Father, how many ties do you suppose there are on that mountain lot?" asked Dick suddenly, from his bowl of mush and milk.

"There ain't one less than 5,000," answered his father, chewing away at the broom straw between his teeth. He had finished his dinner while Dick was shaping his mush into islands and capes in the milk, and sailing his spoon around them on voyages of discovery.

"At 20 cents apiece that would be $1,000 worth, and old Ketchum wants the piece for $300."

"Yes, and 'taint enough; but then I can't get the ties off that mountain without help. I'm a-getting so old, and I haven't no boys worth anything. Ketchum has to get the ties cut and off, and that will take $500 if he has to build a slide, and they can't be got without; but here's the bark and hoop-poles; but how am I to help myself, I can't get them off."

"Father," said Dick suddenly, from his last mouthful of mush, "I believe I can get them down, and without a slide, too."

"You get them down!" exclaimed his father impatiently; "as if yous could do it, boy. Playing with stick and strings; that is the way."

"I know I can do it father," Dick answered quietly but confidently. "I have studied it all out with strings and sticks, and I know it will work, and not cost over $50, instead of $500."

"What fool work, boy; and how do you know about what things cost!" demanded his father.

"The wire slide. I have studied it all out; the cable can be hitched to trees at the top and bottom, and the ties can be hooked on and slid down."

The face of Dick's father would have been a study to a philosopher while his boy was unfolding his plan to him. At first he shook his head dubiously, but the more he thought of it the more favorably it struck him. Presently he slapped his hand on his knee, and exclaimed, "It will work!"

"Of course it will work," said Dick with confidence, and the next day Dick and his father started out to buy the cable and hire men to cut and hew the ties.

Dick had some difficulties to overcome. The first two that came down shattered the lower tree to atoms and brought the sliding business to a sudden end. But he soon devised a switch of an iron rod on a wooden rail, which shot them off to one side and piled them in a heap.

The new invention was all the talk of Lumberton, and when Mr. Hammond had cleared the nice sum of $800, all agreed that Dick's brain was worth more than all of them together, and "the laziest boy in Lumberton" became the smartest boy in Lumberton.—From the Boston Traveler.

## How Millionaires Start.

From the New York World.

If the authors of the Declaration of Independence, who first asserted that "all men were born free and equal," could gaze up and down the vistas of New York life to-day they would find ample justification of their doctrine. Henry Villard, whose ups and downs leave him a power in the Northern Pacific Railroad, earned his first money as a reporter. Austin Corbin worked on his father's farm in Vermont for his first dollar. Collis P. Huntington began his career as a small merchant in this city when he was 15 years old. Calvin S. Brice's first labor was over law books in a country law office in Ohio.

Daniel Dougherty, the silver-tongued orator, made his first bit of money handling the ribbons over his father's 'bus teams on Arch Street, Philadelphia. Eugene Kelly, now a banker worth $5,000,000, earned his passage to this country by driving a jaunting car in his native place, County Tyrone, Ireland.

Vice-President Levi P. Morton was, as a boy, a clerk in a village dry goods store, and aided his father a poor clergyman, with a goodly share of his $7-a-week salary. Russell Sage was taught frugality in his brother's grocery store at Troy, N. Y. Henry Clews' early life was spent as a porter in a woolen house at $3 a week. August Belmont began his career in a counting house.

Rudolph Aronson was an enthusiastic devotee of music in his youth, and earned a dollar or two out of it. Augustin Daly was originally a newspaper man. John Stetson a professional athlete, Tony Pastor a clown. Harry Miner a policeman. Manager Hammerstein a cigarmaker. Manager John A. McCaull ran away from Md. St. Mary's College, Emmettsburg, Md., to become a sergeant in the confederate army at the age of 15 years.

Chauncey M. Depew rose to his present unique position from a law office. He was admitted to the bar in 1858. Jay Gould, it is well known, was a surveyor and school teacher in Delaware County. Ex-Mayor William R. Grace, was a butcher in Calao, Peru, until he became a ship chandler. William Vanderbilt remained on his father's farm until he was 30 years old, when the old Commodore put him in training for a railroad career. Lawyer and Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy was a farmer's boy, and one with mighty poor prospects at that. He dropped farming and taught school daytimes, studying law nights. Erastus Wiman made his first money as a newsboy when only 9 years old.

## Cooking Eggs on Hot Sidewalks.

Two treasury clerks were looking out of a window of the north front of the building in Washington upon the smooth pavement that, unprotected from the sun, becomes hot enough to almost blister your feet through the soles of your shoes.

"That pavement is hot enough to fry eggs!" said one clerk.

"Bosh," said the other.

"I bet you that it is."

A few minutes later, when lunch hour arrived, the two men stood out on the pavement, where the temperature overhead was about 105. One of them had an egg in his hand. Holding it close to the pavement he clipped it open with a knife, and let the contents fall upon the heated flagstone. There was a little sizzle, and the albumen began to grow white and hard.

"What did I tell you?" said the triumphant clerk, and then the two men went and cooled themselves.—Washington letter.